



Charles D. Baker, Governor
Karyn E. Polito, Lieutenant Governor
Stephanie Pollack, MassDOT Secretary & CEO
Astrid Glynn, MassDOT Rail & Transit Administrator



To: MassDOT Board
From: Astrid Glynn, Rail and Transit Administrator
Re: Current Activities
Date: March 15, 2018

Transit:

- BusPlus Reallocation: The Rail and Transit Division received positive responses to its request that interested providers of commuter and intercity bus service submit proposals to lease one or more over-the-road coaches that are to be re-allocated by MassDOT and used in intercity or commuter service. The proposals are being reviewed now by Transit Staff.
- Research: The transit staff has been supporting a study on Commuter Bus Demand, Incentives for Modal Shift, and Impact on GHG Emissions. The study is complete and the researchers from One Center at the UMass Transportation Center are finalizing edits on the final report. This study identified the origin-destination pairs that have the greatest potential for GHG reduction by initiating commuter bus service to attract commuters from private cars. The study will also outline additional research areas for the future.

Transit staff is also researching other state DOTs' policies regarding Volunteer Driver Programs. Specifically, the research is documenting whether state DOTs use FTA Section 5310 funding to support Volunteer Driver Programs and, if so, what are the reporting and compliance requirements for subrecipients. Transit staff will use the findings from this research to develop a Volunteer Driver Program Policy for MassDOT.

- Community Transit Grants: The FY2019 round of the Community Transit Grant Program will be announced in April and the application period will be open from mid-May to mid-June. MassDOT Transit expects to award approximately \$9 million in Federal and State funds to organizations across the Commonwealth to benefit the transportation of seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Rail:

- Rail Plan: Public comment on the Massachusetts Rail Plan closed on March 2. The Plan will be finalized after all 260 comments have been reviewed. It will then be submitted to the Federal Rail Administration for approval.
- Berkshire Flyer: An outside section of the FY18 budget instructed MassDOT to form a Working Group to examine the concept of a Berkshire Flyer that would link Pittsfield and New York and be patterned after the seasonal weekend service provided that the MBTA now offers as the Cape Flyer. The Working Group is concluding its work and will be reviewing a draft report at a final meeting in March. The report will then be submitted to MassDOT and to the chairs of the legislative committees on Transportation, Ways and Means, and Tourism, Arts, and Cultural Development. The report is expected to reflect the material that the Working Group considered in its meetings, including the costs and benefits of extending a New York City based Friday and Sunday Amtrak service from Albany to Pittsfield and the role of local mobility options and promotional partnerships.
- Construction: Construction per the CIP is progressing. \$5.1 million in track work continues on the Middleboro and Framingham Secondary. This will benefit the Foxboro Pilot as well as freight service and potentially South Coast Rail Phase 1. \$1.9 million in track work in the Hyannis Yard has started. This will be used by the tourist trains on the Cape as well as the Cape Flyer. Two bridges were advertised on the Berkshire Line and programmed work on the Knowledge Corridor is proceeding.